REMARKS

Careful consideration has been given by the applicants to the Examiner's comments and rejection of the claims, as set forth in the outstanding Office Action, and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application, as amended, is earnestly solicited.

Applicants note the Examiner's formal objection to Claim 9, with respect to terminology, under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and in order to clearly obviate this particular formality, applicants have amended Claim 9 to indicate that, in essence, the annular channel 101 extends at an angle towards the valve piston 76. This is clearly illustrated in Figure 5 of the drawings, and described in the specification on Page 16, Lines 6 through 22. In essence, as clearly shown in the drawings, and particularly Figure 5, the channel 101 extends at an angle or possibly at a "taper", although the last term may have been deemed somewhat awkward relative to the piston 76. This terminology has now been clarified in Claim 9, thereby obviating the rejection of Claim 9 on formal grounds.

Applicants further note the Examiner's rejection of Claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Dantlgraber, U.S. Patent No. 4,132,506, as detailed in the Office Action.

However, upon careful consideration of Dantlgraber, applicants note that significant and patentable distinctions are clearly evident.

Accordingly, in order to clearly and unambiguously define over Dantlgraber in a patentable manner, applicants have cancelled Claim 2 without prejudice and incorporated the limitations thereof into Claim 1, which clearly indicates that the pressure chamber 45 of the present control apparatus is connected by a counterpressure line to a first pressure line 38.

In contrast with the foregoing, the hydraulic system described in Dantlgraber incorporates a restriction, which is provided in a bore and tolerates a limited flow of fluid from a conduit through a passage to a chamber and via line 17 to a pilot port, referring to Column 3, Lines 48-51 of Dantlgraber.

The major difference between the inventive control apparatus and the hydraulic system of Dantlgraber is derived by the provision of the counterpressure line, as claimed in present Claim 1, whereby the counterpressure line avoids any fluid flow into the pressure chamber 45, whereas to the contrary, in Dantlgraber the hydraulic system does not include any measure which would prevent fluid flow into a pressure chamber.

Basically, Dantlgraber provides for a hydraulic system, including a pump having an outlet, which is connected to a load, and which further incorporates a pilot port possessing a pressurization which is proportional to the pressure at the outlet.

Moreover, in Dantlgraber a restriction is present between the outlet of the pump and the load, whereby the restriction is provided in a bore and facilitates a limited flow of fluid from a conduit through a passage to a chamber and via a line 17 to a pilot port; referring particularly to Column 3, Lines 40-51 of Dantlgraber. As a result, the pilot port in Dantlgraber can be easily contaminated or soiled by particles which are conveyed within the limited flow of fluid extending from a working line of the pump towards the pressure chamber of a regulating valve. Thus, in the publication, as a consequence of contaminating or soiling of the pilot port, the pump of the hydraulic system can be severely damaged inasmuch as the pressure chamber of the regulating valve is connected with the pilot port of the pump, as illustrated in the drawing of the publication.

In view of the foregoing, pursuant to the present specification, referring to Page 2, Lines 18 through 21, it is an important object to provide a control apparatus and a valve block for the control apparatus, which includes means for preventing any deposition of deleterious particles in a region containing sensitive members of a hydraulic system.

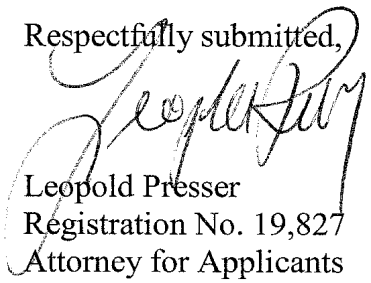
The foregoing structure is now clearly incorporated in the claims by the novel combination of Claims 1 and 2, wherein the counterpressure line connects a pressure chamber 45 of the control apparatus to a first pressure line 38. Accordingly, as a result thereof, the counterpressure line prevents any contamination of the hydraulic pump, inasmuch as the counterpressure stops any fluid flow from entering into a pressure chamber of a volumetric flow control device 26.

The foregoing structure clearly defines patentable aspects and functions, as set forth in the amended presented claims, and also further as set forth in independent Claim 6, and are not in any manner disclosed nor suggested in the prior art reference, irrespective as to whether Dantlgraber is considered singly or in combination with any secondary references.

In view of the foregoing amendments and supporting arguments, the early and favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application by the Examiner is earnestly solicited.

However, in the event that the Examiner has any queries concerning the instantly submitted Amendment, applicants' attorney respectfully requests that he be accorded the courtesy of possibly a telephone conference to discuss any matters in need of attention.

Respectfully submitted,



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